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UNITED STATES FORCES EUROPEAN THEATER
OSS MISSION FOR GERMANY
X-2 BRANCH
APO 655

13 August 1945

TO : Chief CIB, G-2, USFET
SUBJECT : Preliminary Interrogation Report - Kuno WIRSICH,
Preliminary Interrogation Report - Erich O. TOSTER.

1) Attached are copies of preliminary interrogation reports on Haupt (P) Kuno M. E. WIRSICH, and Stabszahlmeister Erich O. TOSTER.

ANDREW M. BENDING
Lt. Colonel A.C.
Commanding.

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SCI THIRD ARMY
APO 403

Y2124

6 August 1945

SUBJECT: Hptstuf (F) Kuno M.E. WIRSICH
TO : CO X-2 Germany

PRELIMINARY INTERROGATION REPORT

CONTENTS:

- I. Introduction
- II. PIR of WIRSICH from TUSA IC
- III. WIRSICH's early contact with Communism
- IV. WIRSICH's early contact with the NEDAP
- v. WIRSICH's contact and work with the Underground "Cell"
- VI. Account of the last days before surrender

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. WIRSICH surrendered himself and a small group of "displaced" Wehrmacht personnel on 2 May 45 near Vilshofen, Bavaria. He offered his help to the local CIC, and led them to recovery of some important and rare documents of Heinrich HIMMLER in his capacity as the "Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums". After his transfer to the Third Army IC, Wirsich wrote briefs for the use of the IC interrogators working on # and other Wehrmacht personnel known to WIRSICH.
2. SCI became interested in WIRSICH about two weeks ago; and as a result an XYZ-1 Form was sent in to CO I-2 Germany on 2 Aug 45, and this Report is prepared to assist in clarifying his case.

II. PRELIMINARY IR ON WIRSICH (TUSA IC):

3. "WIRSICH, born 9 Jan 1908, studied to become a lawyer. Having strong socialistic tendencies and associations he left the "Burschenschaft" (German nationalistic student's association). He joined the Party in April 32, but left again in September 32, and has never become a member again. He then associated with communist circles, and decided to join again a Nazi organization in order to be helpful to the German underground movement. WIRSICH joined the Allgemeine # in August 33 through the influence of his brother, a doctor in Hirschberg/Silesia. In late fall 33 he moved to Berlin where he made contact with communist elements. Upon advice of one of the leaders of these underground cells he took active part in the administration (legal dept.) of one of the Berlin # formations. While WIRSICH pretended to be an ambitious # member he furnished at the same time important information to his underground friends. He gave his own passport and the one of his wife for their purposes. In 1936 he lost his connection with the underground since most of its members had left Germany or had to hide. WIRSICH then tried to leave the # again, but he was not successful. In 1938 he became a member of a law firm in Berlin. At the outbreak of the war he was inducted into the Waffen-#, being member of the Allgemeine-#. He served in the "Totenkopf" Div., but did not rise above the rank of a Pvt. and a truck driver. In January 1940 he managed to be assigned to the legal dept. of the "Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums". He worked for this dept. practically up to the time of his capture, and eventually became the head of it. According to his own statements Wirsich has been sabotaging many efforts of the legal dept. of his office. He collected important documents, which he hid in his house, and which he surrendered to US authorities after his capture. WIRSICH has been very helpful and cooperative during interrogation; he has given much essential information. Wirsich has

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the rank of Hptstuf in the Allgem-#, and of Hptstuf (F) - a technical rank connected with his position, in the Waffen-#".

4. As to WIRSICH's disposition, the IC Report has this to say: "As a member of the Allgem-# and of the Waffen-# WIRSICH belongs into the automatic arrest and detention category. He is to be sent to a PWE. It is strongly suggested that WIRSICH's case be reviewed as soon as possible by the proper authorities in view of WIRSICH's underground activities which led him to become a member of the #. It is this IO's conviction that WIRSICH is sincere in his statements" (Initialed "EW").

III. EARLY CONTACT WITH COMMUNISM

5. Kuno WIRSICH was born 9 Jan 1908 in Niewisch/Brandenburg. His father was a clergyman. Since the Wirsich family was quite large (rather, mother, 3 boys and 2 girls), and the family income was very limited - there was no money for Kuno to go to a university; that is, until he managed to obtain a state scholarship to the Universities of Kiel, Breslau, and Berlin. At that age Kuno was very high-strung and sensitive lad, and was acutely conscious of the fact that he studied only "on sufferance" (scholarship) of the Weimar Republic. His natural liberalism developed into radicalism; he made close contacts with strong radical labor elements: Max SKIRRA and August RATHMANN who were left-wing socialists in Hamburg and in Kiel, and Georg GOTTSSTEIN, a communist from Schreiberhau. Because of these relations WIRSICH was expelled from his school fraternity, which strengthened his radicalism and made him hate anything that was "old and nationalistic".

IV. EARLY CONTACT WITH THE NSDAP

6. In 1931 WIRSICH entered the Law School of Berlin. On 20 April 1932 he decided to join the "new" NSDA Party - to see what it had to offer to a young and poor, but ambitious youth. It took him only a few months to discover that this was no "new" (liberal) party, but the revival of the old nationalistic movement parading under a brand new name. Accordingly, on 13 September 1932 WIRSICH withdrew his membership in the Party and noted his reasons for doing so. A "black" (-Warnekarte) card was placed against WIRSICH's name in the Gau/Berlin NSDAP files; this barred him from ever joining the Party again.

V. WIRSICH'S CONTACT WITH AN UNDERGROUND "COMMUNIST-CELL"

7. While leaving the Party WIRSICH received several threatening notices from the young Nazis, and having witnessed how the Nazis dealt with anybody who did not agree with their policies - he left Berlin (15 September 32) for Hirsch-

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berg/Silesia, home town of his present wife Inge v. MANDEL and his brother Friedrich. In Hirschberg WIRSICH met Inge's former fiancé, a Herr Wolf Dieter FRIEDEL, a Breslauer lawyer and a communist; FRIEDEL and WIRSICH became very close friends. Inge herself was a communist and a close friend to many Jewish communists; so when Hitler came to power in 1933 - WIRSICH sent her away to Switzerland until "things would cool off". In March 33 FRIEDEL was arrested; and was freed by the President SA-Gruppenführer HEINES under the condition that FRIEDEL join the SA. FRIEDEL never complied with this specification, but, instead, moved away from the territory under HEINES' jurisdiction - to Berlin.

8. In early summer 1933 FRIEDEL, GOTTSTEIN, and WIRSICH met in the Riesengebirge (at some cottage in the Schneegebirgsbaude section of the Riesen Mountains). They decided to join Nazi sub-organizations and work against Nazism from the inside; GOTTSTEIN's communistic record was too well known, and all of his attempts failed. It was also decided that FRIEDEL, too, would only call Nazi attention to his communistic record if he attempted to join any Nazi organization. WIRSICH's record (officially) was clear and with the help of his brother Friedrich (a Wehrmacht doctor of some prominence in Hirschberg) he was allowed to join the NSDAP even though he was not a member of the Party. He was accepted as an NSDAP member in August, but his entry was back-dated to June 30th to circumvent some NSDAP rule. NSDAP made a security check but only locally (in Hirschberg).
9. WIRSICH served with the Hirschberg NSDAP until 1 October 33. During this time he met another communist, Dora THIELE, a Hirschberg Landgericht Referendarin. Through Frl. THIELE WIRSICH met her friend ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Hans LAUSCH. LAUSCH, though an anti-Nazi could not be won for any communistic cause, because he was a Catholic and equally hated both Nazism and communism.
10. In fall of 1933 WIRSICH and Dora THIELE went to Berlin. Dora immediately introduced WIRSICH to a Herr Walter KOCH (true name "KOHN"). KOCH was a full-time Communist agent and organizer of Communist "cells" throughout Germany. Regular meetings were now held at the apartment of a Scotswoman, Evelyn ROBERTSON (Nassauischestr 44, Berlin): This particular "cell" was composed of the following people:
 - a) Walter KOCH, alias KOCH, the leader
 - b) Ilse HÜHNEMANN, a friend of the well-known Berlin lawyer, ALEXANDER-KATZ; Frl. HÜHNEMANN was actively engaged in communist work in Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War.
 - c) Dora THIELE, a good friend of Friedrich RÖTTER, an old Berlin lawyer known for his defense of Herr THÄLMANN.
 - d) Georg GOTTSTEIN, a communist from Schreiberhau.

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- e) Wolf Dieter FRIEDEL.
 - f) "THEA", Walter KOHN's girlfriend, a sales girl at the "Kurfürstendamm" Cafe for the "Salamander" branch.
 - g) Kuno WIRSICH, and his fiancée Inge v. MANDEL.
- 11) During all this time WIRSICH failed to report his whereabouts to the #, and finally in January 34 on KOHN's advice he reported to his old # unit at Berlin (to which he belonged in 1932). After some questioning and reproaches WIRSICH was assigned in April 34 to the 75th #-Standarte (75th #-Regt.). His lawyer's experience qualified him as a specialist ~~XXX~~ in drafting briefs for all disciplinary matters of the #-Regiment. Now he was really in position to supply # information to his communistic friends. In order to have a better chance in meeting his friends without detection, WIRSICH arranged to live in the same house as his fiancée, ostensibly in her apartment (Apostel-Paulus Strasse Appartments).
12. WIRSICH's fiancée's mission was to keep in close contact with some employees of the Auswärtiges Amt (Foreign Office), and WIRSICH's own job was to apply himself wholeheartedly to his #-activity, to appear as if he wanted to make it his life's career, to earn consideration for some special tasks within the frame of #- so that he would be able to collect more and more incriminating information against the #. All of his other personal activity had to be subordinated to this one goal. He had to even discontinue his correspondence with a good friend of his, Hans GOLDE, who had to leave Germany because life in Germany became unbearable for him since he was a Jew.
13. WIRSICH had worked very successfully as an inside informer against the # and for his "cell". He had delivered to KOHN all kinds of statistical and informative items on the # (growth, personnel, relations between the 75th #-Regt and its subordinate units (the Sturmloale), addresses of the leaders, their future plans). Another example of his work for the "cell" may be given here: When in 1934 the #-Oberabschnitt Ost sent a note to the 75th-#-Standarte, that a certain member of its Marienfelder-#-Sturm was a former member of the KPD, and was therefore to be investigated, WIRSICH gave this bit of information to KOHN who in turn warned the man concerned about what was going on and to be extra careful.
14. WIRSICH was at that time extremely active; he found time in addition to the above-mentioned activities to give a hand to his old pal, Wolf Dieter FRIEDEL, who was charged with compiling some economic and political statistics for some communist underground publication.

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15. At the end of 1934 or in the beginning of 1935 the Berlin Gestapo was beginning to note the activity of the KOHN's circle; first indication was when it had searched the premises of KOHN's fiancée, THEA. Since nothing incriminating was found during this search KOHN decided to avoid any future trouble and sent THEA and her mother out of the country. THEA travelled officially as Inge v. MANDEL, using her pass. WIRSICH's own pass was also given to KOHN for similar use long before that (the pass was reported by WIRSICH as "lost". But even now KOHN felt insecure - and decided to leave Germany himself, leaving all the books and brochures in WIRSICH's charge, to be preserved until someone else came to take KOHN's place as leader of the "cell".
16. KOHN went at first to Prague, and then, reportedly, to Paris. In any case, sometime in 1935 a Parisian anti-fascist by the name of "RUBINSTEIN" (or Silberstein, or even Goldstein) contacted WIRSICH with a note from KOHN asking WIRSICH to give "RUBINSTEIN" any available information. "RUBINSTEIN" stayed in WIRSICH's house for a few days, wrote out the information given him by WIRSICH, attended some meeting of a Jewish Organization in Berlin's Meinekestrasse, accompanied Inge (now already married to WIRSICH) to some anti-fascist women's club (Antifaschistischer Frauen Club) - and went back to France.
17. Walter KOHN's official successor was a 35 yr old, blond (wearing glasses) individual who called himself "ERNST". He ran the "cell" with much more caution. Regular meetings were discontinued; individual members of the "cell" did not meet at all, having their own contact with ERNST. ERNST began to stress not communism but anti-fascism.
18. WIRSICH met ERNST twice a week and each time at a different place and at different ~~time~~ hour. ~~XXXXX~~ ERNST never divulged his real name or who stood behind him. WIRSICH was now used mostly to help the victims of the Stapo. An instance is here cited:
In winter 1934/5 (or 35/6) ERNST called Dora THIELE, who contacted WIRSICH and told him to take a young communist girl across the Czech border. WIRSICH met the young girl (25 yrs) at the G8rlitzer Station, drove her to Hirschberg, and then over the Wosseckerbaude (via side roads) to the Czech border town of Polaun.
19. In 1935/6 ERNST instructed WIRSICH to arrange for the defense of Ernst THALLACK. WIRSICH hired the Berlin lawyer RÖTTER for this purpose. RÖTTER did not belong to the immediate circle with which WIRSICH was connected, but was well acquainted with Evelyn ROBERTSON; WIRSICH, FRIEDEL, GOTTSTEIN, and Dora THIELE all worked for him for a while. RÖTTER was half-Jewish, but had fought in the last war and therefore was admitted to continue to practice law. During the trial RÖTTER was careless enough to copy the written

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charges against THALMAN in spite of the prohibition by the Stapo; he did not return all of his copies after a specific order by the Stapo, and he was denounced as a communist sympathizer by one of his office employees. He fled Germany with Miss ROBERTSON, according to last reports he was somewhere in London.

20. WIRSICH's apartment at Westarpstrasse 4 was used as the "cell's" office; greatest precautionary measures were used: WIRSICH would see to it that at certain time neither his wife nor the man in the next apartment were anywhere even close to the place; when everything was clear an elderly man (about 45-50 years old) would arrive with his secretary, typewriter and papers or books. A moment later ERNST would arrive alone - all three would stay about 2-3 hours each time, then leave one by one. But one time ERNST did not keep his appointment, and was never again seen by either WIRSICH or any of the other members of the "cell" (Of course ERNST never talked to more than to one man at a time, but according to the description of him, it was ERNST KIM who contacted also Dieter FRIEDEL, Georg GOTTSTEIN and Dora THIRLE; they too lost contact with him at the same time. Disadvantage of this type of personal contact was shown now: WIRSICH, being an H-man, found no possibility of establishing any contacts with new cells. Inge made contact with a former lawyer Harry LEPMANN during her vacation in Davos; but nothing came out of it, since LEPMANN was then on his way to Buenos Aires, where he evidently remained for the duration. Inge found now work with lawyer ALEXANDER-KATZ (1935/36), and so did Ilse JÜHNEMANN. WIRSICH and his wife started a hearty friendship with one Otto LANDAUER from Munich in March 1937 while vacationing in the Knorrhütte on the Zugspitz Plateau (S of Garmisch-Partenkirchen). LANDAUER was the former president of the Alpenverein/Munich-Node, but lost his post when the Nazis came to power because he was Jewish. Eventually he emigrated to Liechtenstein, Mauren 100. The WIRSICH family continued to correspond with him until 1940, when strict war censorship prevented a continued exchange of letters. However LANDAUER could not be won for any underground work; he did not want ~~WIR~~ to take such risks.

21. After WIRSICH lost contact with his friends, he also lost interest in his H work, which was reflected in his not getting any promotion until 1 March 1945. In 1937 WIRSICH attempted to resign from H; this, of course was no simple matter. WIRSICH tried a bit of underhanded work: discovering that Inge v. MANDEL had a hereditary disease he applied to the H for granting him permission to marry her anyway; this the H never granted in all known previous cases, but here an exception was made: he could, if he insisted marry the girl "on his own responsibility", but would cut himself off from entry into the "Sippenbuch" (=Family-tree book of the H). He married Inge in June 1937 and has now two heal-

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thy children.

22. From 1935 to 1938 WIRSICH worked also with the Deutsche Siedlungsbank in the legal dept. He finally quit this position because he had many difficulties caused by his refusal to join the DAP, and because he could "stomach any longer the NS spirit which pervaded this concern" so closely allied with the Reichsnährungsministerium (Reich Food Ministry). Leiter of the Bank was his former Party "friend" and later the SS-Standartenführer, Ferdinand HIEGE (now married to Berta HALLERMANN, holder of a high honorary medal, and widow of the old Party chief of Hitler in 1923).
23. On 1 May 1938 WIRSICH joined the great Berlin law firm of "R.A. STEGMANN, Dr. v. KRIES, u. Hans J. GÖTZ" (Burggrafenstrasse 4, Berlin), at first as an associate and later as a partner.
24. The Polish Campaign showed WIRSICH the first unlucky result of his former membership in the Waffen-SS. He was inducted and spent 4 weeks training at Buchenwald and few more weeks in Dachau. In Buchenwald WIRSICH had no contact whatsoever with the inmates; also at Dachau part of the camp was emptied to give the trainees billets and training space, but the very atmosphere and the tales about the camp policies caused WIRSICH to shudder and made him resolve to try to get out of the Waffen-SS. He felt that there were not the "Kamerads" with whom he would want to face the enemies and possibly die. He strongly appealed to his law associate, Konrad v. KRIES and insisted that he try everything he can to have him transferred out of the Waffen-SS. KRIES finally managed to have WIRSICH transferred as a lawyer to the office of the "Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums". Here WIRSICH remained until the end of the war working together with his law associate, Hans Joachim GÖTZ. He left the Waffen-SS as a Schütze (Pvt) and an LKW-driver, on 14 January 1940.
25. DIVISIONS under the "REICHSKOMMISSAR FÜR DIE FESTIGUNG DEUTSCHEN VOLKSTUMS" - Heinrich HIMMLER:

HIMMLER's Adjutant (Stellvertreter) - General GREIFELT
Zentralamt Chef - SS-Brigadeführer CREUZ
Rechtsabteilung - GÖTZ, WIRSICH

Abt I/Menscheneinsatz (Liaison with transportation agencies, issuance of travel directives for the repatriated Reichsdeutsche, etc)
Abt II/Arbeitseinsatz (Assigning work to farm workers)
Abt III/Gewerbliche Wirtschaft (Setting up in business of technical workers; also helping in securing of home furnishing)
Abt IV/Landwirtschaft (Procurement of farms for those who have been farmers in foreign countries)

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Abt V/Finanzen (Making all arrangements for the transfer of moneys of the Volksdeutsche from foreign countries to Germany)
Abt VI/Planung (Making plans as to what sections and what people had to be resettled to give room for the incoming Volksdeutsche)
Abt VII/Amt Bauten (Construction of homes and farm buildings for the immigrating Volksdeutsche)
Abt VIII/Zentralbodenamt (Designating the area and type of land to which each Volksdeutscher was entitled).

- 26) While with this office WIRSICH had an opportunity to copy and steal all kinds of incriminating documents, as for instance:
- a) "HIMMLER's plan for the future", available only in one copy.
 - b) "Program for the Eastern Europe" which is a Nazi pattern outlining the methods by which they would rule the territories acquired in the East. dealing
 - c) And about 100 of smaller documents with statistics and personalities connected with this infamous office.
- 27) WIRSICH was no longer in contact with the underground, because of his position he could not establish any initial contact, and all of his old friends with the only exception of FRIEDEL have fled the country. And FRIEDEL himself had no contacts of his own. WIRSICH decided, therefore, to continue his work and at first opportunity to surrender all the information and documents to the Allies (which he has done immediately upon his surrender to the Americans.

VI. ACCOUNT OF THE LAST DAYS BEFORE THE SURRENDER

- 28) On 18 April Gen GREIFELT fled to Tyrol. WIRSICH and the other Antchefts were told to join him in order to add to the appearance that this was only a move to a safer location for the office. WIRSICH had to attend to a very "timely toothache". He now was the highest ranking officer of the Dienststelle and was told by Generalmajor HASSENSTEIN to take his other members to Vilshofen, Bavaria and join a Wehrmacht unit. By common consent WIRSICH led the 7 other remaining members of the Dienststelle and some other Wehrmacht soldiers to some empty barracks in Vilstal. On 1 May WIRSICH made an arrangement with the local Volksturm not to defend the Vilstal, and the following day made a contact with an American MP to whom he surrendered himself and the small group under him. (Remainder of the story is contained in the introduction)

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Approved:

S/L B. Holtzman *[Signature]*
Eric W. Timm
Capt AUS
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